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March 11, 2021

General Gustave F. Perna
Chief Operating Officer
Federal COVID-19 Response for Vaccine and Therapeutics
Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Suite 745G
200 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear General Perna:

I would like to commend you for your pivotal role in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and leadership on Operation Warp Speed. The vaccine is key to getting our country back on its feet.

With over 40-years of service to our nation and the United States Army, you understand the critical need for troop readiness to defend and protect our democracy. To guarantee readiness, we must ensure troops at home and abroad, and their family members, are protected against the COVID-19 virus by having reliable access to vaccines.

Unfortunately, it has been brought to my attention some troops and their families stationed abroad are experiencing significant delays, causing appointments to be cancelled. The Landstuhl Regional Medical Center posted on their Facebook page on Wednesday, March 10th, "*We are currently waiting for a resupply of vaccines and do not anticipate receiving any for the next several weeks. Based on diminishing vaccine quantities, we have made the difficult decision to cancel some upcoming appointments.*"

According to the same post, in some cases, second-dose appointments have also been cancelled, which could require them to restart the vaccination process. Those still waiting to receive their first dose of the vaccine have been given no timeline as to when more vaccines might be available. Soldiers and their family members are, rightfully, very frustrated and confused, unsure what this means for them.

Our men and women serving their country – especially those who are serving abroad, away from their family and friends and, in many instances unable to come home for almost a year – should be a priority for the Department of Defense. Especially when reports show a significant number

of U.S. troops are hesitant to take the vaccine, it's incredibly disappointing to hear those who desperately want the vaccine are having a hard time receiving it.

As we began to investigate these stories, my office has also heard reports of troops having their vaccination appointments cancelled at military hospitals within the United States as well. This also includes cancelled appointments for second doses of the vaccine.

I write to you today to bring this serious issue to your attention and to request further information on the Defense Department's plan for vaccinating our troops and their family members. I request that you respond as quickly as possible as this is a time sensitive issue.

- How many troops stationed both at home and abroad have received their first vaccination? How many have received all necessary doses?
- What is the Department of Defense's strategy for vaccinating family members of troops stationed overseas since they are unable to access vaccination locations in the United States?
- Besides Landstuhl, what other overseas bases are experiencing disruptions in vaccine deliveries? Are there any U.S. bases also experiencing these disruptions, and if so, please identify them?
- Knowing now of these reports of vaccination appointments being cancelled, what plans will be put in place to improve efficiency and speed of vaccine distribution for Department of Defense personnel, so this does not happen in the future?

Thank you in advance for your time addressing my concerns. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress

CC: General Lloyd James Austin III

Secretary of Defense